

Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee



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| Date | 7 September 2006 |
| Venue | Town Hall, Lytham St Annes |
| Committee members | Kiran Mulholland (Chairman) John Prestwich (Vice-Chairman) John Dolan, Richard Fulford-Brown, Louis Rigby, Bill Thompson, Thomas Threlfall, Stephen Wall, Colin Walton |
| Other Councillors | Linda Nulty, Albert Pounder, Fabian Wilson |
| Officers | Dave Joy, Christopher Kitchin, Paul Norris, Tracy Scholes, Carolyn Whewell |
| Others | Sheila Neil |

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 July 2006 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

3. Substitute members

No Substitute Members were reported.

4. Citizens Advice Bureau

Tracy Scholes (Democratic Services and Member Support Executive Manager) and Councillor Albert Pounder (Customer Relations and Partnerships Portfolio Holder) presented a joint report that detailed the situation between the partnership of Fylde Borough Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The report detailed that the two Citizens Advice Bureau's (CAB's) within the Borough were subject to a Partnership review undertaken by the Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee in 2005. The review covered both Lytham St Annes and Kirkham and the Rural Fylde. Both CAB's were independent of each other with a separate Trust Board governing the affairs of the respective CAB's and a separate management structure within each.

Mrs Scholes highlighted that Councillors Elizabeth Oades and Kiran Mulholland undertook the review and concluded that whilst the two CAB's provided a worthwhile service they should consider ways of working more efficiently to reduce costs. The Committee had also raised concerns that no formal arrangements were in place governing its partnership with the CAB's and requested that a Service Level Agreement was entered into for both partnerships which would set out expectations in terms of performance.

It was highlighted that in April 2006 a Service Level Agreement was for the first time entered into and was jointly signed up to by both CAB's. This established performance indicators, opening times for the service and reporting/monitoring mechanisms. Quarterly monitoring meetings were a requirement of the SLA together with an annual report to this committee summarising progress against the SLA.

Mrs Scholes also informed the Committee that on the 25 May 2006, following a fire at the St. Annes CAB office the Lytham St. Annes Trust Board took the decision to close the CAB with immediate effect. This resulted in the SLA not being honoured by the St Annes CAB and had caused considerable disruption. Mrs Scholes then went on to state that progress had been made with the Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB and monitoring meetings established. The Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB and NACAB (The National Association of CAB's) were currently working together to produce a Business Plan outlining their proposals for a Pan-Fylde service. The Pan-Fylde service would have its main headquarters based in Kirkham and would provide outreach services to other areas of the Borough such as Wesham and Freckleton.

Councillors raised concerns that there would not be enough funding to support the one CAB in Kirkham, given the Lytham St Annes CAB had received the majority of the funding allocated in the last budget, and therefore the funding situation should be revised. Members were advised that it was likely that extra funding would be made available to Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB to account for the extra demands on the service.

Members sought clarification that the service provided to Lytham and St Annes had not adversely been affected by the closure of the St Annes office and were reassured that Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB had been working to absorb clients from this area.

Councillor Pounder expressed his disappointment with the way the St. Annes CAB closed their doors and stated that on the day of the fire at the St. Annes office Councillor Pounder consulted with Simon Kuleratne to find alternate accommodation at the One Stop Shops.

Following discussion Members RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that the National Association governing Citizen Advice Bureaux has validated the earlier work undertaken by this committee by advocating a revised service delivery option for the advisory service in Fylde.
2. That disappointment be expressed at the decision of the Lytham St. Annes CAB to close its operation without reference to its customers, partners, national organisation and the council and it be commented that a planned closure should have been implemented by the Lytham St. Annes CAB.
3. That progress made on the establishment of an SLA and the developmental work undertaken with the Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB be welcomed.

4. That the Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee be invited to make any comments on the future delivery of a Pan Fylde CAB advisory service.
5. That the CAB report back in six months time once Kirkham and Rural Fylde CAB have drawn up a business plan for a Pan Fylde Service.

5. LGA/IDeA Reputation Campaign

Dave Joy (Deputy Chief Executive) and Paul Norris (Community and Cultural Services Executive Manager) presented a joint opening report detailing the Local Government Reputation Campaign and the Council's current position with regard to meeting the objectives of the campaign. Mr Joy highlighted that within the Council's Corporate Plan for 2006-07 was the key action: 'To enhance the reputation of the council through the Local Government Association/Improvement and Development Agency (LGS/IDeA) 'Reputation' toolkit (4 year action)'.

Mr Joy stated that MORI held a series of research groups across England and Wales in a range of authorities including several 'excellent' performers. From these research groups it was found that despite improved Council services, public perceptions of local government remained where they were decades ago. The research showed that most people saw their Council as remote, low profile, bureaucratic and inefficient.

Mr Joy detailed that MORI went on to analyse hundreds of resident's surveys from across Britain. From this MORI were able to identify 12 core action points that all councils could adopt.

Members were presented with a measurement framework designed by LGA, which helped to measure the council's implementation of core actions.

Mr Joy went on to update the members on the present status of Fylde Borough Council in meeting these core action points. It was noted that the Council had met some of the core actions however more funding might need to be invested into certain areas to improve the service.

Members RESOLVED:

1. To endorse the action of the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to commit the council's support for local government Reputation Campaign.
2. That the Committee notes the Council's current position with regard to the LGA's Reputation measurement framework.
3. That officers formulate an action plan for the council to meet the objectives of the Reputation Campaign and report his to a future meeting of the committee.
4. That Dave Joy report back to the Committee at a later date to present a costed action plan for implementing the core actions.

6. Local Strategic Partnership Scrutiny Review - Progress Report

Councillor Kiran Mulholland (Chairman of the Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee) Carolyn Whewell (Overview and Scrutiny Officer) presented a joint progress report, which detailed the progress made by the Task and Finish Group on the in depth Scrutiny review of the Local Strategic Partnership.

The Report Highlighted that in May 2006, the Community Outlook Scrutiny Committee agreed to nominate a Task and Finish Group to carry out an in depth Scrutiny review of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), following concerns that Members knew little about the structure of the LSP and how Members could get involved.

Councillor Mulholland stated that the Task and Finish Group met in June to agree the terms of reference for the review, which were agreed as:

- To develop a full and greater understanding of Fylde Local Strategic Partnership on behalf of all Councillors.
- To review the role of the LSP, its composition and accountability.
- To set out the role of Scrutiny in future monitoring of the LSP to ensure the Council works in partnership with the LSP to deliver services.
- To make recommendations as appropriate to Cabinet and Council

Councillor Mulholland informed the Committee that the Task and Finish Group had undertaken an information gathering exercise with a view to pulling together the relevant information about the LSP to help carry out the review successfully. The Chairman went on to note that the Task and Finish Group had suffered a series of setbacks in this period with the resignation of the LSP Manager, Penny Rose. As a result the Task and Finish Group has had difficulty obtaining some of the basic detailed information required. The Task and Finish Group met with Christine Miller, Interim LSP Manager to discuss the next stages of the review and were now in a position to progress further.

Consequently, the Task and Finish Group requested that the period of the review be extended to January 2007.

Councillor William Thompson was appointed as a new member of the LSP Task and Finish Group.

Following a debate Members RESOLVED:

1. Members approve the new completion date of January 2007
2. Members comment on the next stages of the review following a verbal update from the Task and Finish Group.
7. Outside Bodies Update - The Blackpool International Airport Master Plan

Councillor Kevin Eastham provided Members with an update on the progress of the Blackpool International Airport Master Plan. The Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee was in the process of carrying out a review on the implications for Fylde of the growth of Blackpool International Airport.

Councillor Kevin Eastham highlighted the events from the Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Tuesday 25 July 2006.

Councillors raised concerns over the expected increase in noise that would be generated from the airport expansion and that this noise and pollution could have an effect on property prices of houses in the vicinity of the airport.

The Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the report.
2. Thanked Councillor Kevin Eastham for his time.
3. To receive an update on the progress of the airport expansion in 6 months time.

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